Minnesota’s Olmstead Plan at DHS

Enabling a Brighter Future

2017 second and third quarter update

April through September 2017 saw the continued implementation of Minnesota’s Olmstead Plan and significant accomplishments toward people with disabilities living, learning, working and enjoying life in the most integrated setting. Highlights include:

**Disability Hub MN**

Disability Hub MN provides a valuable service to the people of Minnesota by helping with problem solving, system access and navigation and future planning. Disability Hub MN staff members are experts at digging deep into a person’s information to ensure they are receiving the right benefits, information and support so they can live their best life.

A Disability Hub MN options counselor’s job is to talk through all of the benefits and insurance options with the caller to ensure he or she understands each step. The counselor also advocates for the person with different agencies such as the county, Medicare and Social Security, if needed.

Anyone can access this service by calling 866-333-2466 or visiting the Disability Hub MN website: disabilityhubmn.org.

Recently, Disability Hub MN staff provided this valuable service to a person who was having trouble navigating his benefits related to work, Medicare and health insurance.

He needed assistance understanding his health insurance and Medicare payment options. After seeking help from the county and calling Medicare on his own, he was getting nowhere and became more frustrated. Finally, he was referred to Disability Hub MN.

The Hub Options Counselor started a three-way call with the county financial worker. DHS staff confirmed the person’s budget was calculated incorrectly, and as a result, the county reimbursed him $264 for Medicare Part B retroactive premiums. The county also reimbursed him for premiums he paid when he instead should have been eligible for Medical Assistance for Employed Persons with Disabilities and a Medicare Savings Program.

Through the support of the Disability Hub MN staff, in collaboration with DHS and the county, the caller has more financial independence and is meeting his goal of being able to work. Now, he knows he does not have to worry about health insurance and that he can call the Hub any time for assistance.
August 2017 Quarterly Report

Highlights

The August 2017 Quarterly Report on Olmstead Measurable Goals showed that these goals in the Olmstead Plan have made progress:

• The CADI Waiver waiting list has remained at zero for three consecutive quarters.
• The number of individuals who have transitioned to integrated settings from segregated settings, such as intermediate care facilities, nursing homes, and other segregated settings, is on track to meet the annual goal of 1,224.


“Finally, I can do what I want.”
Reports MinnPost

“‘Free at last’: State program moves disabled clients off work crews, into independent jobs” reports MinnPost.

On October 16, 2017, reporter Andy Steiner reported the story of Karina Reinert, who wasn’t satisfied with her job through a state-run day program for people with disabilities.

“When she learned that she could leave the day program behind and get job training and assistance in finding work with an outside employer through DHS vocational services program, Reinert decided to take advantage of the opportunity.

“For the last five months, she’s been working as a greeter and food prep worker at AMC Theater Southdale. With the help of a job coach, Reinert found the opening, prepped for the interview and landed the position at the theater.” Read the story.

“I’m doing what I need to do and I’m doing it on my own.” — Reinert in MinnPost

FACT Team celebrates first year of service

The Department of Human Services and the Department of Corrections (DOC) are partnering to pilot Forensic Assertive Community Treatment (FACT) in Minnesota. FACT serves individuals in the criminal justice system with a diagnosis of serious and persistent mental illness integrate into the community. This promising practice aims to reduce recidivism and hospitalizations for highly underserved populations that often have complex treatment, rehabilitation and support service needs.

In addition to providing mental health services, FACT teams focus on increasing employment, building interpersonal relationships and reducing substance use. FACT is an enhancement of Assertive Community Treatment (ACT), an evidence based practice, by embedding criminal justice partners within the team and targeting individuals involved in the criminal justice system with a SPMI diagnosis.

The RADIAS FACT Team (Ramsey County) recently celebrated their first year of service. A second team started Spring 2017 in Hennepin County (ResCare FACT Team). FACT is an ongoing collaboration of DHS, DOC, county probation (Ramsey and Hennepin), and mental health providers (RADIAS and ResCare) to offer improved services to meet their individual needs.

DHS employee wins award

Cara Benson of the Disability Services Division received one of 10 national Self Direction awards at Applied Self Direction's conference on May 8 and 9 in Baltimore. The award recognizes exceptional contributions to advancing self-direction and supporting people with disabilities in self-direction.

More information on the awards program is on the ASD website.
Regional Quality Council conducting interviews

Regional Quality Council members, staff and trained volunteers will begin conducting interviews this fall with randomly selected people with disabilities who are receiving home and community-based services.

The interviews are part of the councils’ charge to improve quality of services, to increase person-centered practices in their parts of the state and to inform the Minnesota State Quality Council. Individual findings will be confidential and can be used by people being interviewed to share with their support team to make quality improvements in their lives.

Aggregated data collected also will be used to:
- Determine service gaps
- Recognize best practices in services and share them
- Inform training for disability services providers
- Make recommendations to the Minnesota State Quality Council.

Regional Quality Councils, which grew out of the State Quality Council, examine and improve services for people with disabilities in specific regions and encourage community involvement.

Currently there are three Regional Quality Councils: Arrowhead (Carlton, Cook, Lake and St. Louis counties), Metro (Hennepin, Scott, and Dakota counties) and Region 10 (Olmsted, Houston and Wabasha counties. For more information contact:
- Dan Zimmer, State Quality Council Director, 507-289-3472, dan.zimmer@state.mn.us
- Zoey Legee Arrowhead Regional Quality Council coordinator, The Arc Northland, 218-726-4746, zleege@arcnorthland.org
- Kayla Nance, Regional Quality Council project manager, The Arc Greater Twin Cities, 952-915-3669, kaylanance@arcgreatertwincities.org
- Kerri Leucuta Region 10 Quality Council manager, The Arc Southeastern Minnesota, 507-287-2032, kerril@arcse-mn.org

Olmstead work plan approved

Olmstead Plan work plans were approved by the subcabinet at the end of October.

The Olmstead plan provides the goals, but the work plan provide specific actions that state agencies will take to make progress towards these goals.

Goals of the Olmstead plan include:
- Person-Centered Planning
- Transition Services
- Lifelong Learning and Education
- Waiting List
- Transportation
- Healthcare and Healthy Living
- Positive Supports
- Crisis Services
- Community Engagement
- Preventing Abuse and Neglect
- Quality of Life Survey
- Cross Agency Data Strategy
- Communications
- Dispute Resolution

For the full list of activities to realize the goals of Olmstead, see the workplan

Waiver funding lawsuit dismissed

October 20, 2017, Parties to the Mikkelson v. Piper lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court recently agreed to dismissal of the suit, which dealt with management of funding for two of the state’s disability home-and community-based services waiver programs.

“Dismissal of this lawsuit coincides with the significant progress we have made, working with counties and tribes, toward eliminating waiting lists for the waiver programs,” said Human Services Commissioner Emily Piper. “With additional funding and legislative authority to manage these funds on a statewide basis, we work hard to match people to services and eliminate inconsistencies in service access for people with disabilities across Minnesota.” More information
Home ownership rounds out active life

Cliff Poetz has an active life that includes work, exercise and being a leader in self-advocacy for people with disabilities.

He also become a homeowner in 2011 with the help of the Housing Access Services (HAS) program initiated by the Minnesota Department of Human Services in partnership with Arc of Minnesota.

Poetz has a developmental disability and receives services under the Medical Assistance Community Access for Disability Inclusion (CADI) home and community-based services waiver.

He had been living in public housing in Minneapolis for 10 years before deciding in 2011 he was looking for more privacy and a quieter neighborhood.

Poetz met with HAS staff and together they formed a plan to search for a place with the amenities that met his needs and budget. HAS staff found several places and helped Poetz view them until the perfect one was found in Plymouth. It was a condominium that was affordable, and Poetz was very interested in moving forward with a purchase. HAS typically helps people rent apartments but purchasing a place made the most sense for Poetz. As part of the process, HAS helped Poetz meet with his brother to weigh the pros and cons of his potential new place. A decision was made to move forward.

HAS staff helped connect Poetz with a mortgage company and attended the closing to ensure he fully understood the parameters of the purchase and agreements. The closing went smoothly and a moving date was set. Poetz said moving day was hectic but wound up fine. HAS helped with moving belongings, getting a bed and assembling it and finding a dresser, chair, table and chairs for his new kitchen. Hennepin County helped in ensuring Poetz had access to providers who knew him well and supported him in his new place.

When asked about his neighbors, Poetz says they are great. In fact, he has come to know his neighbor across the hall and has entrusted her with a key in cases of emergency. He describes his new place as quiet and more independent than living in public housing.

From his condo, Poetz enjoys access to a variety of activities, including his job at the Institute for Community Integration at the University of Minnesota. There he helps translate training curriculums to make the information more understandable for people with disabilities. He has been a leader in the self-advocacy community for many years and has worked to help educate and empower people with disabilities and their families. For these efforts, he has received several honors, including the 2016 Access Press Charlie Smith Award, named in honor of the founding editor of Minnesota’s disability community news source.

Since Poetz moved, the success of Housing Access Services has led to the expansion of the housing access coordination service in the disability waivers.

For more information on housing access coordination, contact Disability Hub MN at 1-866-333-2466.

For more information and the complete Olmstead Plan, visit mn.gov/dhs/op/
For accessible formats of this publication or additional equal access to human services, write to dsd.responsecenter@state.mn.us, call 651-431-4300, or use your preferred relay service. (ADA [9-15])